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Classification of authors by literary prestige

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Abstract

In this study, I investigated a new system to classify authors by literary prestige. The notion of ‘canon’ was considered to lack clear theoretical and empirical grounding. Evaluation and classification practices were examined and operationalized from the perspective of literary field theory. The value that is attributed to authors by literary institutions and their agents was taken as the main indicator of literary prestige. Value attribution was measured by establishing the attention authors receive from such institutions as literary encyclopedias, literary prizes, academic studies, and publishing houses. Measurements were conducted for 502 authors varying in both critical acclaim and public appeal. The statistical technique *Principals* was used to analyze institutions’ measures. The results show that one dimension stood out, which was interpreted as authors’ literary prestige. Given its institutional base, this form of prestige is called Institutional Literary Prestige (ILP). The subsequent classification of authors met expectations. However, further validations of the instrument are recommended.

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1. The problem of classification

In the field of literary studies, the notion of classification by quality is not only one of the most frequently applied notions, it is generally also one of the least explicated. Some authors are considered more important than others, but it is left unexplained on what grounds this hierarchy is based. Many literary scholars claim to objectively investigate and establish the literary quality of an author, while describing, interpreting, and evaluating his or her texts. However, the absence of an unequivocal standard to measure literary quality makes this claim methodologically untenable (Van Rees, 1987). It has been stated that it is the conception of literature that scholars embrace that determines the quality they attribute to—rather than establish for—the author (Bourdieu, 1983; Van Rees, 1983, 1987). Depending on their conceptions of literature, scholars take a certain position on a literary work. Frequently,

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this position can be qualified as an expansion on views of literature ventilated earlier by other scholars. Whatever the position taken, in the very selection of an author as an object of research or review, a trace of classification can already be detected. Most authors are never studied or reviewed (Janssen, 1997). Yet, critics and scholars seldom justify their choices in this selection process. The question of what makes a selected author more important than non-selected ones remains unanswered.

A common way of dealing with the problem of selection, besides ignoring it, is to refer to selections other actors in the literary field have already produced. Literary criticism operates by a threefold selection and classification process that successively involves news media, literary magazines, and academic journals, and that is based on gradually reaching agreement on authors' literary value (Van Rees, 1983, 1987; Van Rees and Vermunt, 1996). Eventually, this process results in consensus of opinion on the literary works and authors thought to be the most important ones: the 'canon'. Clearly, this connotation of 'canon' differs from the correct dictionary meaning: "all the writings by a particular author which are known to be genuine" (Collins Cobuild, 1987: 201). But more frequently, critics and scholars refer to the 'canon' in the sense of an unspecified 'list of high-quality works we all agree about'. Historically, these two meanings coincide in the classical and ecclesiastical origins of the term (Gorak, 1991). Particularly the historical religious use of 'canon' in which selecting and authorizing the proper religious texts was a means to creating and maintaining socio-ecclesiastical unity, is mirrored in today's modern use. The nature of both texts and critics may have drifted away from this religious context over the last centuries, in the use of 'canon' references are still restricted to either authorities or one or two prototypical instances (Shakespeare, Kafka). This rhetorical use of the term 'canon' is a current but objectionable substitute for giving arguments to support selection. In appealing to the 'canon', critics refer to that community of agreement where no difficult questions are asked; thus, they reduce the risk of being accused of making subjective choices. Many scholars and critics appeal to the 'canon' to avoid selection and classification problems at the level of the author, to support their own conceptions of literature, or to give an overview of the literary world at the macro level.

Using the notion of 'canon' to solve classification problems, however, leads to at least three serious problems. First, 'canon' is never defined and its content remains unexplicated. Many scholars come up with some definition and provide the names of authors 'definitely' belonging to the 'canon', but clear unequivocal criteria leading to a concrete operationalisation, and classification, are absent. A reason for this lies in the rhetorical appeal scholars make to the supposedly established literary quality of the authors. Using this line of argument puts one in the position of having to come forward with the 'evidence' and thus make objective comparisons. Since the 'evidence' consists of hardly comparable evaluations in which the uniqueness of the author is stressed instead of more general characteristics that mark the quality, this doesn't happen.

Second, the term 'canon' has lost much of its original neutral significance by being used (too) many times in normative discussions on the importance of specific literary works. In many ways, it has become an instrument used in the process of value

attribution instead of describing the outcome of the process of value attribution. Both criticizing and defending the ‘canon’ should be seen as acts of interference in which neutrality is lost. This is an important issue, because this common normative approach to the ‘canon’ is one of the main reasons why scholars rarely go to the trouble of defining the ‘canon’, making explicit its content, or explaining which criteria should be used for inclusion. Even discussions that on the surface seem neutral (‘we could ask ourselves whether the old canon still suffices’) bear the signature of the normative approach.

The third problem, at a methodological level, is that the term ‘canon’ suggests that literary quality is dichotomous in nature: an author either belongs to the ‘canon’ or s/he doesn’t. In reality, more levels can be perceived. As will be shown, these levels are largely a result of the various dimensions of which literary prestige consists. Most defenders of the ‘canon’ admit this, but fail to face the consequences. In recent years, debaters in the ‘canon’ discussion tried to integrate this dimensional perspective with their original normative standards, by splitting the ‘canon’ up into several ‘canons’—either consumer-based (for instance, a school canon) or producer-based (for instance, a women’s canon, a gay canon). This does not solve the third problem (nor the first two); it merely shifts its focus. What it does show, however, is that at the heart of the ‘canon’ debate lies a social embeddedness. Choices made in the selection and classification of books are socially constructed. Though many critics would like us to believe in their abilities to classify authors with nothing more than the texts at hand, they perform their job in a social context. Not only do scholars listen carefully to other experts in the literary field, since the sociocultural changes in the 1960s, they also have to take public opinion into consideration. Structural social changes in which the power differences between the elite and non-elite grew smaller—owing to increased educational and welfare levels—have reshaped the cultural market into a more competitive, consumer-based one, and consequently weakened the institutional bases of cultural authority (DiMaggio, 1991). Without an audience paying heed to critics’ opinions, both their expertise and the value attributed to their selections are robbed of much of their importance. As a consequence, critics’ preferences as the basis of selection and classification operations are losing ground to audiences’ preferences, especially in fields in which producers of culture have direct contact with consumers of culture. Indeed, indications of this trend can be found in consumer-oriented outlets such as newspapers and schools. During the past decades, even quality newspaper critics paid growing attention to forms of culture that were traditionally labelled as ‘popular’ or ‘mass’ culture (Heilbrun, 1997; Janssen, 1999). Also, we find clear examples of perspective shifts in literary education, such as the curriculum change at American colleges (Lauter, 1991; Bak, 1993) and at Dutch secondary schools (Verboord, 2003).

The problems caused by the use of ‘canon’ do not mean that it is impossible to develop a theoretical, objective classification of literary authors. However, a condition should be met. Any suspicion that researchers are letting their personal taste or preferences affect the result, should be avoided. This means that one has to be reluctant to involve ‘experts’ or ‘connoisseurs’. Unlike experts who are invited to make a medical diagnosis or a judicial decision, literary experts tend to proceed on

implicit normative premises peculiar to their conceptions of literature. Classifying authors is best done from a meta-level point of view, where the researcher does not take part in the process of attributing value, but merely observes how others attribute value. This implies that a classification by 'literary prestige' is preferable to a classification by 'literary quality'. Using the term 'quality' suggests that it is possible to establish the intrinsic literary value of texts, while using the term 'prestige' implies that the classification of authors in the literary field is a socially determined process.

In this study, I investigated a new system to classify authors by prestige. To this end, a measuring instrument was developed that focused on the social determinants of authors' classification in the literary field. An author's literary prestige was decisive for his or her position in the classification. Literary prestige was based on the symbolic value attributed to authors by criticism and other institutions in the literary field. For this purpose, the value ascribed to authors (amount of attention given by a scholar or critic) and the extent to which literary scholars and critics are consensual in the attention they pay to authors were quantified.

The classification aimed at in this study could be named 'canon', but given the above mentioned objections to the use of this term, this was avoided. Instead, the continuous nature of literary classification was stressed by referring to the degree of literary prestige. In this way, authors' ascribed characteristics remained the focus rather than the dichotomous trait of 'being or not being in the 'canon' (which is derived from these ascribed characteristics, or other, unobserved characteristics). In the next section I discuss how literary prestige can be measured.

2. Literary prestige

An author's prestige is dependent on how s/he is perceived by significant others. Not only does the attribution of value to the author in question have to meet wide general acceptance, both attribution and acceptance increasingly gain weight when coming from persons possessing considerable authority on literary matters. Judgements of the author are then legitimized. Hence, reliance on significant others is a crucial element in the assessment of value attribution. In Bourdieu's (1983) theory of the literary field, this principle is explained by the relations between the positions that persons hold in the literary field ('space of positions'), their specific individual characteristics ('space of habitus'), and the choices they make in their practice in the literary field ('space of position-takings'). The position in the literary field is indicated by the relationship the author has with institutions in the field (publishing house, literary criticism, literary awards). Relevant characteristics ('dispositions') of authors are, for instance, age, gender, education, and professional experience. Position-taking refers to artistic choices as well as other professional manifestations in the field. According to Bourdieu and other social researchers (see Van Rees and Dorleijn, 2001), the three above mentioned spaces are highly interdependent. Some position-takings can be expected to yield more approval among other actors in the field than others. In turn, authors who have relatively high prestige can more easily

afford distinctive position-takings that perhaps would not be accepted, if they had a lower status. In the same way, personal characteristics can influence the perception of authors.

The following are some examples of related research results: Gerhards and Anheier (1989) found that authors of literature which is considered 'legitimate' are more likely to have followed academic studies in literature, more likely to be members of writers' organizations and less likely to write in local dialects. Janssen (1998) found that the extent to which authors are engaged in sideline activities such as publishing in channels other than books, serving as editors of literary magazines, and being members of literary prize juries, has a positive effect on the critical attention the authors receive. Other important factors influencing the giving of attention by literary critics are the status of the publishing house and the status of the periodicals in which reviews are published (Van Rees and Vermunt, 1996; Janssen, 1997). Note that the institutions mentioned—literary magazines, literary prizes, publishing houses, periodicals—all occupy positions of their own within the literary field. The prestige of an author is, therefore, also related to the prestige of the specific institutions to which he or she is professionally linked (De Nooy, 2002).

Literary prestige is the outcome not just of value assignments in the literary field, but also of the beliefs expressed in these value assignments. This is the reason why attributed value is referred to as symbolic value: it follows not so much from the features of the literary work itself as from the beliefs behind the judgements made by the agents involved. Literary prestige, defined as the esteem authors have in the literary field and based on the value that is attributed to their literary work, was therefore operationalized as the result of value assignments of relevant literary institutions.

Classifications used in survey-based reader research—both in the form of genres or a list of authors and titles—often mirror a ranking by literary prestige. However, determining an author's literary prestige is a difficult task. A strategy used in the past was asking experts to determine an author's literary prestige (Kraaykamp, 1993; Kraaykamp and Dijkstra, 1999). As was said before, experts usually make subjective evaluations. Nevertheless, one could argue that as long as the cooperating experts form a representative sample of the total population of experts, which is large, a reliable measurement is possible. The experts' mean evaluation would then resemble the mean evaluation in the literary field. However, Kraaykamp's (1993) attempt at operationalising literary prestige was jeopardized by a number of problems. First, the experts involved formed a selective group, mainly of scholars from three University Literature Departments and a couple of Public Library employees. Although the response rate was quite high, it should be noted that all non-respondents were scholars. The reliability of the judgements notwithstanding, it is unclear whether the non-respondents, as well as professional groups not invited to participate, would give the same opinions. The second point of criticism regards the temporal embeddedness of the measurements. Asking experts for their judgement is necessarily confined to the moment the question is put forward. However, opinions change, owing to the dynamics of the literary field. Through reviews, essays, or studies, experts constantly produce new opinions on old and new literary output. The question is then how to account for this dynamism.

The third, and most serious, problem concerns the validity of the measurements (Van Rees, 1994). Literary prestige was operationalized in terms of literary quality and unconventionality, both seen as unidimensional concepts, according to the nature of the items used. For instance, ‘literary quality’ was measured using statements such as ‘[...] has literary value’ and ‘[...] belongs to the literary canon’. Because of the ambiguity of the meanings of terms like ‘literary’ and ‘canon’, it remains unclear what exactly was meant by these terms. In other words, what was the conception of literature that was used in the classification? Many alternative conceptions of literature — ideas about what determines the value of a literary text according to the specific reader — may have been used (see Van Rees, 1987). The experts participating in Kraaykamp’s procedure were given no clear information on the intended meanings of key concepts like ‘literary value’ or ‘canon’ before they were asked to evaluate the books and authors. Therefore, we do not know how these concepts were interpreted in the evaluation process, and, consequently, what the nature of the measured literary prestige is.

In order to determine an author’s literary prestige, I sought several indicators whose relevance derives from the position in the literary field. Literary criticism is the institution that, by virtue of its specialisation and authority in evaluating and classifying literary works, has the greatest influence on the quality and levels of prestige with which authors are associated. As critics lack an unequivocal, theoretically based value standard that can be used to validly classify texts, they operate under uncertainty. However, they do reach a certain consensus in their judgements (Van Rees, 1987). The structure of the literary field and the power relations between spaces, institutions, and actors contribute to this. A critic’s authority depends in part on the approval of other actors in the field. Therefore, a critic will see to it that his opinions do not deviate too much from the mean evaluations as this would jeopardize his credibility. To reduce uncertainty, he keeps a sharp eye on nontextual indicators of the nature and quality of literary works (reputation of the publishing house, earlier works by the same author, etcetera), the opinions of colleagues (reviewers, jury members in literary contests, compilers of anthologies, etcetera), and even the ideas of agents working in other institutions in the literary field (De Nooy, 1991; Janssen, 1997). Consequently, critics must manoeuvre strategically between following the *communis opinio* and adding their own distinctive yet positively rated contributions to the discourse, in order to obtain a positive reputation for themselves. This is true for individual agents within institutions as well as for institutions themselves. Value assignments in the literary field are, therefore, rarely exactly the same, yet in many ways, they are similar. Illustrations of such consensus can be found in the curricula of secondary schools (Verdaasdonk, 1984) and universities (Huber, 1995).

These social features offer an opportunity to construct a valid and reliable operationalisation of literary prestige. Authors were weighted at various locations (journalism, literary magazines, universities) by various means (reviews, essays, academic studies, literary prizes, entries in literary encyclopedias). The multidimensional nature of the concept of literary prestige was accounted for, by using multiple observations of various types of institutional indicators. These indicators

all represented a specific dimension of literary prestige, both by the nature of their practice and by the position of the actors involved. Whereas the practice of literary encyclopedias boils down to the preservation and retrieval of literary works from various times and places, literary prizes reward literary work in a manner that is set in the here and now. Consequently, authors are selected in different ways. The criteria for literary prizes—in terms of the function and value attributed to literature—are much closer to contemporary views of literature than the criteria for literary encyclopedias. As for the agents involved, the position they hold in the literary field legitimates their actions. In most instances, it is critics and academic scholars who perform selection tasks by virtue of their professional status.

By using institutional indicators I suffered no loss of non responding indicators and I could more easily use measurements at various points in time. However, every operationalisation has its limitations. In the case of measuring literary prestige, limitations concern the use of a restricted number of available indicators. I had no information on reviews in daily or weekly periodicals; nor on publications in literary magazines. Another simplification of reality lay in not considering factors that vary with time. Unlike the measurement of artistic prestige by De Nooy (2002), the dynamic aspect of prestige was averaged out. I aimed for a measurement of literary prestige for the period 1980–2000. However, contrary to De Nooy's (2002) measurement, it was intended that our index would be interpretable in terms of actual prestige instead of fluctuations from a roughly measured point of origin of prestige.

3. Indicators

Table 1 shows the indicators used for measuring literary prestige. The four primary indicators were number of literary prizes won, attention given in academic studies, entries in literary encyclopedias, and the literary reputation of the author's publishing house. The other two indicators were number of prizes for popular literature won and entries in encyclopedias of popular literature. Together, these indicators covered the dimensions of literary prestige. They are discussed briefly below.

Table 1
Indicators for classifying authors by literary prestige

Indicators prestige	Type of measurement	# Sources used	# Value categories
Literary prizes	# Prizes won, weighted	> 60 prizes	7
Academic studies (scholarly journals, monographies etc.)	# Studies (using two electronic bibliographies)	> 4000 journals	8
Literary encyclopedias	# Words	13 encyclopedias	9
Prizes for popular literature	# Prizes won, weighted	> 25 prizes	4
Encyclopedias of popular literature	# Words	9 encyclopedias	5
Publishers	Literary status of publisher	1 Nugi-code/book	4

The winning of literary prizes is an indication of an author's contemporary prestige. The number of prizes—weighted by their prestige in the literary field—that each author has won in his or her career was counted, to measure the author's contemporary prestige. Table 2 shows which literary prizes were used, ordered by country of origin, type of prize (oeuvre, title or nomination), and weight. In total, over 60 prizes were taken into consideration: among them, over 50 international literary prizes (stemming from the US, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spanish speaking countries, Scandinavia, and the Netherlands) and 15 prizes for children's literature (mostly from the Netherlands). Both prizes for separate literary titles and prizes for complete oeuvres were involved. Like De Nooy (1989), I used the following characteristics to establish the prestige of the prizes: the organisation which awards the prize, the object of the prize (title or oeuvre), the seniority of the prize, and the amount of money connected with the prize. Oeuvre prizes outweighed title prizes, international prizes outweighed Dutch prizes, and prizes for adult literature outweighed prizes for children's literature. The exact weights were arbitrary and were attributed by the researcher.

For most prizes, but not for all, entries are strictly confined to the country where the prize is awarded, and consequently to the language that is spoken there. This is specified in Table 2. Furthermore, it should be noted that authors born before 1880 were not taken into account for this indicator, as not many literary prizes were awarded before 1945.¹ Based on the weighted number of prizes won, authors were placed in seven categories.

Authors' entries in literary encyclopedias were considered honors that are granted mainly to authors with large, unanimously respected oeuvres. The greater the importance attached to an author, the larger the entry. In 10 international literary encyclopedias, the number of words devoted to an author was counted and weighted by the total size of the encyclopedia (Table 3). The encyclopedias cover a long period—they were published between 1983 and 1999—and are regarded as standard reference books, displayed in university libraries and public libraries all over the world. I mainly included encyclopedias open to authors of all languages and periods. However, to increase the number of items, exceptions were made for two 20th century encyclopedias, one encyclopedia of European literature and one of literature in English. In addition, three literary encyclopedias on literature in Dutch were consulted to obtain scores for Dutch (and Flemish) authors who were not mentioned in international reference books. These scores were used after being downwardly weighted by the regression coefficient of international to national encyclopedias of authors having entries in both (0.601). This allowed the 'inbetween' authors to be ranked lower than their Dutch colleagues who were internationally acclaimed, but higher than colleagues who failed to receive any attention in encyclopedias.

In Table 3, the column labelled '# observed authors' shows for how many authors observations—both zero scores and non-zero scores—were made. The encyclopedias

¹ As a consequence, two Nobel prize winners, Thomas Mann and Herman Hesse, were not given a score on this variable.

Table 2

Literary prizes used (covered period between parentheses)

Literary prizes								←Weight
10×	5×	3×	2×	1×	0.5×	0.25×	0.10×	
International (more than one field of language)								Type prize
<i>Nobel Prize</i> (1901–2000)								oeuvre
<i>Neustadt Prize</i> (1970–2000); <i>Austrian Community prize for European Literature</i> (~1969–1999); <i>European Prize for literature/Aristeion award</i> (1990–1999)								oeuvre
<i>International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award</i> (1996–2000)								Title
Nominations <i>Neustadt Prize</i> (1970–2000); Nominations <i>International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award</i> (1996–2000)								Nominations
United States								
<i>Pulitzer Prize for Literature</i> (1918–2000); <i>National Book Award</i> (1950–2000); <i>National Book Critics Circle Award</i> (1975–2000); <i>PEN/Faulkner Award</i> (1981–2000); <i>Los Angeles Times Book Prize</i> ^a (1980–2000);								Title
Nominations <i>National Book Award</i> (1950–2000); Nominations <i>Los Angeles Times Book Prize</i> ^a (1980–2000);								Nominations
Great Britain								
<i>Hawthornden Prize</i> (1919–2000); <i>James Tait Black Memorial Prize</i> (fiction) (1919–2000); <i>John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize</i> (1942–1999); <i>Somerset Maugham Award</i> (1947–2000); <i>W.H. Smith Literary Award</i> (1959–2000); <i>Booker Prize</i> (1969–2000); <i>Whitbread Book Award</i> (novel/first novel) (1973–2000)								Title
Nominations <i>Booker Prize</i> (1969–2000)								Nominations
France								
<i>Grand Prix de Littérature</i> (1912–2000); <i>Grand Prix de Littérature Paul Morand</i> (1980–2000); <i>Grand Prix National des Lettres</i> (1951–2000)								Oeuvre
<i>Prix Goncourt</i> (1903–2000); <i>Prix Femina</i> (1904–2000); <i>Prix Femina étranger</i> ^a (1986–2000); <i>Grand Prix du Roman</i> (1918–2000); <i>Prix Renaudot</i> (1926–2000); <i>Prix Interallié</i> (1930–2000); <i>Prix des Deux-Magots</i> (1933–2000); <i>Prix Meilleur Livre étranger</i> ^a (~1953–2000) ^b ; <i>Prix Médicis</i> (1958–2000); <i>Prix Médicis étranger</i> ^a (1971–2000); <i>Prix Novembre/Décembre</i> (1990–2000)								Title

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Literary prizes								
10×	5×	3×	2×	1×	0.5×	0.25×	0.10×	←Weight
Germany								
<i>Georg Büchner-Preis</i> (1947–2000)								Oeuvre
<i>Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels</i> ^a (1950–2000); <i>Heinrich Mann-Preis</i> (1953–2000); <i>Bremer Literaturpreis</i> (1954–2000); <i>Herman Hesse-Preis</i> (1957–1999); <i>Nelly Sachs-Preis</i> (1961–1999); <i>Heinrich Heine-Preis</i> (1972–1998); <i>Heinrich Böll-Preis</i> (1980–2000); <i>Geschwister Scholl-Preis</i> (1980–1999); <i>Hans Fallada-Preis</i> (~1981–1999) ^b								Oeuvre/ title
Spain and other spanish language								
<i>Premios Cervantes</i> (1975–2000); <i>Premio Nacional de las Letras Espanolas</i> (1984–2000)								Oeuvre
<i>Premios Nadal</i> (1944–2000); <i>Premios Planeta</i> (1952–2000); <i>Premio Casa de Novella</i> (1960–2000); <i>Premio Formentor</i> ^a (1961–1967); <i>Premio Biblioteca Breve</i> (1962–1973, 1999–2000); <i>Premios Rómulo Gallegos</i> (1967–1999); <i>Premio Nacional de Narrativa</i> (1977–2000); <i>Premios Principe de Asturias de las Letras</i> ^a (1981–2000); <i>Premios Xerais de Novela</i> (1984–1996);								Title
Italy								
<i>Penna d’Oro</i> (1957–1986)								Oeuvre
<i>Premio Bagutta</i> (1927–2000); <i>Premio Viareggio</i> (1930–1999); <i>Premio Strega</i> (1947–2000); <i>Premio Campiello</i> (1963–1999); <i>Premio Bancarella</i> ^a (1953–1999); <i>Premio Chianciano</i> ^a (~1956–1988) ^b ; <i>Premio Mondello</i> ^a (~1977–1998) ^b ; <i>Flaiano International Literature Prize</i> ^a (fiction & superprize) (1976–2000); <i>Premio Nonino</i> (1978–2000); <i>Premio Internazionale Nonino</i> ^a (1984–2000); <i>Premio Grinzane Cavour</i> ^a (1982–2000); <i>Premio Antico Fattore</i> ^a (~1987–1998) ^b ; <i>Premio Curzio Malaparte</i> ^a (~1995–2000) ^b								Title
Scandinavia (Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Faeroes; Greenland)								
<i>Nordic Prize</i> (1962–2000); <i>Sonning-Preis</i> (~1973–1996) ^b								Title /oeuvre
Netherlands/Flanders								
<i>Prize for Dutch Literature</i> (1956–1998)								Oeuvre
<i>PC Hooft Prize</i> (1947–2000); <i>Oeuvreprize Flemish community</i> (1930–1999)								Oeuvre
<i>Constantijn Huygens Prize</i> (1947–2000); <i>Stateprize for Flemish Poetry/Essay/Fictional Prose</i> (1924–1998)								Oeuvre/title

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Literary prizes								←Weight
10×	5×	3×	2×	1×	0.5×	0.25×	0.10×	
<i>F.Bordewijk Prize</i> (1948–2000); <i>J.Campert Prize</i> (1948–2000); <i>Multatuli Prize</i> (1946–2000); <i>Herman Gorter Prize</i> (1945–2000); <i>Busken Huet Prize</i> (1947–2000); <i>Lucy B en CW van der Hoogt Prize</i> (1925–2000); <i>R.Prinsen Prize</i> (1947–1979); <i>Anton Wachter Prize</i> (1977–2000); <i>AKO Literature Prize/Generale Bank Literature Prize</i> (1987–2000); <i>Libris Literature Prize</i> (1994–2000); <i>VSF Poetry Prize</i> (1994–2000)								Title
Prizes for children's and youth literature (Dutch & International)								Oeuvre Oeuvre Title
<i>Hans Christian Andersen Prize</i> ^a (1956–2000) <i>State Prize for Youth literature</i> (1964–1982); <i>Theo Thijssen Prize</i> (1985–2000) <i>Golden Griffel</i> (1955–2000); <i>Nienke van Hichtum Prize</i> (1964–1999); <i>Woutertje Pieterse Prize</i> (1988–2000); <i>Golden Zoen</i> (1997–2000); <i>Boekenleeuw</i> (1986–2000); <i>Prize of the Flemish Community</i> (1989–1998); <i>Carnegie Medal</i> ^a (1936–2000); <i>Newbery Medal</i> ^a (1922–2000) <i>Silver Griffel</i> ^a (1971–2000); <i>Silver Zoen</i> ^a (1997–2000); <i>Boekenwelp</i> ^a (1990–2000); <i>Vlag en Wimpel</i> ^a (1980–2000); <i>Honorable mention Zoen</i> ^a (1997–2000)								Title
Coding in Princals categories: (0 = 1)(0.1–0.5 = 2)(0.51–2.0 = 3)(2.01–5.0 = 4)(5.01–10 = 5) (11–19 = 6)(20–hi = 7)								

The period for which data on prize winners were taken into account is shown between parentheses.

^a Also open to authors from other language areas.

^b ~The complete list of winners was not at our disposal.

were highly correlated in giving attention to authors. Adding the scores proved to give a reliable scale: Cronbach's alpha was 0.89. The authors were placed in nine categories.

Like encyclopedias, academic journals usually start to pay attention to authors late in their careers. However, once they start to receive attention, this can continue far beyond their deaths. The number of academic studies devoted to an author was counted by consulting two electronic bibliographies of language and literature studies: the Modern Language Association Library (MLA) and the Bibliography of the Dutch and Frisian Language and Literature Studies (BNTL), in which data on more than 4000 journals can be found (Table 4). Both bibliographies were consulted in the spring of 2001. For each author, the number of hits was counted. Publications

Table 3

Literary encyclopedias used (country and year of origin between parentheses)

International (Cronbach's alpha = 0.89)	# Observed authors	# Pages per encyclop.
Modern Encyclopedia of World Literature (Neth, 1983)	502	4000
MacMillan Guide to Modern Literature (UK, 1985)	480	1300
Kindlers Neues Literatur Lexikon (Ger, 1988/98)	502	22 000
Der Literatur Brockhaus (Ger, 1988)	502	2200
The Reader's Encyclopedia. Third edition (UK, 1988)	502	1090
New Literary History of European Literature (Neth, 1994)	364	1360
Merriam Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature (US, 1995)	502	1240
Oxford Companion to 20th Century Literature in English (UK/US, 1996)	188	750
Wilpert Lexikon der Weltliteratur (Ger, 1997)	502	1680
Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century (US, 1999)	480	2800
Dutch (Cronbach's alpha = 0.90)		
Winkler Prins Lexicon of Dutch Literature (Neth, 1986)	308	465
Oosthoek Lexicon of Dutch and Flemish Literature (Neth/Flanders, 1996)	308	380
Euwboek Signalement of 100 years of novels (Neth, 1999)	290	290
Coding in Princials categories (0 = 1)(low–30 = 2)(31–60 = 3)(61–100 = 4)(101–200 = 5)(201–400 = 6)(401–700 = 7)(701–1500 = 8)(1501–hi = 9)		

Table 4

Bibliographies used for counting literary studies (period for which studies were counted between parentheses)

Literary studies	# Observed authors	Time of consultation
MLA (Modern Language Association Library) (1963–; English, German, French, Spanish, Italian)	502	April 2001
BNTL (Bibliography of Dutch and Frisian language and literature studies) (1940–)	502	February 2001
Coding in Princials categories: (0 = 1)(lo–10 = 2)(11–50 = 3)(51–100 = 4)(101–300 = 5)(301–600 = 6)(601–1000 = 7)(1001–hi = 8)		

not relating to the literary work of the author were not included. For non-Dutch authors, the score on the MLA was used. As the MLA concentrates on five major languages (English, German, French, Spanish, and Italian), the BNTL score was used for Dutch authors. This score was weighted, however, to the same coefficient as was used for the encyclopedias (0.601).

The authors were placed in eight categories.

Publisher's status was the last type of indicator used. All three indicators discussed above have a drawback: few authors gain enough status to yield meaningful observations that can be used for their prestige ranking. Many authors were left with the same, undifferentiated zero score. However, the publisher of every author was known, and this helped me to differentiate between authors, especially those with zero scores on the other indicators. Not only do publishers perform the first selection by determining which authors will be published, they also aim to build up a stable pool of authors. The more authors of a high literary status on the publisher's list, the more prestigious the publishing house, and the more this prestige reflects on other less prestigious authors on the publisher's list (De Glas, 1998). Publishers were classified according to the literary level (determined by the percentage of titles having a literary genre code) and the size of their list (number of new titles published in the year 2000) (Table 5). Drawing on the work of Janssen (1997), I distinguished four categories: (A) large literary publishers (> 49% literary books and > 20 new titles); (B) medium-sized literary publishers (> 49% literary books and 4–20 new titles); (C) small literary publishers (> 49% literary books and 1–3 new titles) + mixed publishers of all sizes (< 50% literary titles and < 50% romance titles) + publishers of children's literature (> 49% children's literature); and (D) publishers focusing on romance titles (> 49% romance fiction).

Moreover, for the indicators 'winning of prizes' and 'entries in encyclopedias', popular literary items were taken into account. These items concerned entries in encyclopedias devoted to specific popular literary genres (Table 6) and winning prizes for specific popular literary genres (Table 7). Although popular literary prestige represents a dimension of its own, it was assumed that it would also yield literary prestige; that is, that it would put these authors in a position between that of those having much literary prestige and that of those having no literary prestige at all. Within cultural genres, differentiation in prestige is hierarchical yet gradual in nature. Literature can be perceived as a subgenre of the broader cultural genre 'fiction in print' to which other subgenres, such as 'crime fiction', 'science-fiction', and 'romance fiction' belong. Though these subgenres generally have their own producers, reviewers, and consumers, they do occasionally meet and overlap. For example, authors of 'crime fiction' sometimes receive attention from literary critics, when their work is considered to be interesting not only by the standards of crime fiction, but also by the standards of literary fiction. Whether intentionally or not, these authors have managed to affect the conceptions of literature and tastes of literary scholars in such a successful way that they are perceived as 'crossovers', reviewed in both literary and popular literary outlets.

Over time, this principle seems to have become more important. In recent decades, literary critics and scholars became open to other types of literature, and this led to a

Table 5

Publishing houses of classified authors (number of new titles in 2000 and the percentage of literary titles between brackets)

Publishing houses				# New titles	% Literary	% Romance
A	B	C	D			
Large literary				> 20	≥ 50%	n.a.
Meulenhoff (75/58%); De Geus (60/93%); De Arbeiderspers (43/97%); Atlas (41/82%); De Bezige Bij (36/99%); Prometheus (35/94%); Contact (34/90%); Bert Bakker (30/92%); Anthos (29/90%); Querido (25/97%); Veen (20/91%); Elsevier/Manteau; ^a Penguin ^a						
Medium size literary				4–19	≥ 50%	n.a.
Arena (19/90%); De Kern (19/64%); Vassallucci (18/100%); Nijgh and Van Ditmar (17/90%); Wereldbibliotheek (16/91%); In de Knipscheer (14/94%); Ambo (13/95%); Athenaeum–Polak en Van Gennep (12/100%); Davidsfonds (11/83%); Podium (9/100%); Van Gennep (7/57%); Conserve (5/100%); Thomas Rap (5/78%); Van Oorschot (4/100%); Amber; ^a Lannoo ^a						
Small literary				1–3	≥ 50%	n.a.
Donker (4/50%); Balans (3/100%); Forum (2/83%); De Sfinx (1/100%); Agathon; ^a Holland; ^a Novella; ^a Loeb; ^a Tiebosch; ^a Stols; ^a Sdu; ^a Wereldvenster ^a						
Non-literary all sizes				n.a.	< 50%	< 50%
Luitingh-Sijthoff (68/16%); De Boekerij (58/32%); Het Spectrum (41/16%); Bzztoh (25/38%); Bruna (24/0%); Van Holkema and Warendorf (22/26%); De Fontein (13/22%); Harmonie (8/27%); Kosmos (5/0%); Bosch and Keuning (4/0%); Novapres (2/0%); Novella; ^a Hollandia; ^a Becht; ^a Nieuwe Wieke; ^a M and P; ^a K-tel; ^a Ten Have; ^a De Toorts; ^a Kitchen Sink ^a						
Youth books				n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Zwijssen; Clavis; Kluitman; Van Goor; Deltas; Callenbach; Standaard; Ploegsma; Lemniscaat; Sjaloom; Elzenga; Facet; Infodok; Het Goede Boek; Piramide; Bulaaq; Omnium						
Non-literary: romance				n.a.	< 50%	≥ 50%
Harlequin (330/1%); Westfriesland (22/0%); Kok (22/44%); Van Reemst (19/0%); ^b Zomer and Keuning (7/0%); Gottmer (6/25%); Gideon (5/0%); Hardeman (1/0%); De Vuurbaak; ^a Zuidhollandse Uitgeversmaatschappij; ^a Vrijbuiters; ^a Kadmos ^a						

Coding in Princals-categories: (A = 4)(B = 3)(C = 2)(D = 1)

^a No titles published in 2000; categorisation based on figures from 1991 or 1979; if not available, on library genre categorisation of titles.^b Nugi genre categorisation was not used, library genre categorisation was used instead.

Table 6

Encyclopedias of popular literature used (country and year of origin between parentheses)

Encyclopedias of popular literature	# Observed authors	# Pages per encyclo.
Science Fiction Writers (US, 1982)	502	600
Masters of Mystery and Detective Fiction (US, 1989)	502	270
20th Century Science-Fiction Writers. Third Edition. (US, 1991)	480	940
Anatomy of Wonder (US, 1995)	502	390
St. James Guide to Crime and Mystery Writers (US, 1999)	502	1090
Encyclopedia of Science Fiction (us, 1993) and Encyclopedia of Fantasy (US, 1996)	502	2400
Oxford Companion to Crime and Mystery Writing (US/UK, 1999)	502	505
Vrij Nederland Detective and Thriller Guide (Neth, 1999)	502	33

Coding in Princals categories: (0 = 1)(low–100 = 2)(101–300 = 3)(301–600 = 4)(601–hi = 5)

certain upgrading of formerly ‘low-brow’ genres (DiMaggio, 1991). These genres have, therefore, grown in status: not only do critics pay attention to these sectors more often (Heilbrun, 1997; Janssen, 1999), but high status consumers also participate in them more often (Peterson and Kern, 1996). The consequence of this for determining literary prestige is that new legitimizing authorities emerged, and new reference points came into use for categorizing authors. Critics specializing in non-literary genres acquired more opportunities to publish, and other institutional indicators such as prizes and encyclopedias were developed. At the same time, commercially successful authors within non-literary fiction genres received growing attention from literary critics. Notably, the subgenre of the ‘literary thriller’—a label used for books by authors such as Donna Tartt, Peter Høeg, and Nicci French—came into fashion during the last decade. Given these developments, incorporating indicators of the prestige of authors of popular literature seems to be an important step.

Nine encyclopedias of popular literature were consulted (see Table 6). The number of words spent on an author was used as measurement. The variable was divided into five categories. The prizes for popular literature that were included amounted to 25 items. The authors were placed in four categories. This is specified in Table 7.

The scores on literary encyclopedias, academic studies, and literary prizes were highly correlated ($r=0.88$, 0.72 , and 0.49) as were the scores on encyclopedias of and prizes for popular literature ($r=0.75$). The type of publisher was positively correlated with the indicators of more ‘legitimate’ literature (r between 0.27 and 0.30). No significant correlations were found between literary indicators and the indicators of popular literature.

4. Selection of authors

A database was created with information on the literary prestige of 502 authors. These were all writers of prose, or authors who have written a substantial part of

their oeuvre in prose. In the selection of authors, variation in attention given by critics and in the familiarity of the authors among the general public was taken into account. Authors differ markedly regarding these two features (Janssen, 1997). Both critics and the public focus on a small group of authors. The growth in the number of published authors and titles over the last decades has reinforced this skewness. As far as the distribution of titles reviewed in Dutch periodicals is concerned, in 1978, only 54% of all published titles was selected for review; in 1991, this had dropped to 36% (Janssen, 1997). Also, a fairly small number of writers' names occur on bestseller lists (Verdaasdonk, 2001). Most of these names do not occur on lists of reviews in top periodicals. Hence, the two forms of attention overlap only partly.

Because the purpose of the measurement of literary prestige was also to determine the reading levels of individual readers in a different study (see Verboord and van Rees, 2003), authors were selected who are reasonably well known or well-known to the public. At the same time, differentiation between authors in amount of attention received from critics was ensured. Compared to the total population of authors, those receiving much attention were overrepresented in the sample. Table 8 gives an overview of the types of authors selected. Authors were categorized by the attention they received in literary criticism (at least one score on the above mentioned literary prizes, encyclopedias, or studies), criticism of popular literature (at least one score on the above mentioned prizes for or encyclopedias of popular literature) and from the public. Authors were considered known among the public if they had either entered the bestseller top 10 between 1983 and 2000 at least once, or had been mentioned in a national reading survey as the last read author at least once (Kraaykamp and Dijkstra, 1999).

The unequal distribution of authors over attention categories shown in Table 8 is not just a result of the selection procedure. It should be noted that the authors' selection preceded the actual measuring of the attention given to the authors. As no information on encyclopedias, prizes, and studies was available beforehand, the selection itself had to be based on an educated guess concerning the amount of attention given to the authors. It was only after this preselection that I was able to

Table 8

Authors selected, with types of attention paid (literary criticism, criticism of popular literature, public) and examples

Types of attention			N	Examples
Lit. criticism	Criticism pop. lit.	Public	47	Harry Mulisch; Stephen King; Umberto Eco
Lit. criticism	Criticism pop. lit.	–	23	Minette Walters; Ian McEwan; William Gibson
Lit. criticism	–	Public	158	Isabelle Allende; M. Houellebecq; G.G. Marquez
Lit. criticism	–	–	115	Toni Morrison; Albert Camus; Julia Alvarez
–	Criticism pop. lit.	Public	6	Nicci French; Jack Higgins; Elizabeth George
–	Criticism pop. lit.	–	18	Preston & Child; Andy McNab; William Sarabande
–	–	Public	15	Virginia Andrews; Nicholas Evans; Robert Mawson
–	–	–	120	Bodie Thoene; Lorenzo Carcaterra; Daniel Ransom
343 (68%)	94 (19%)	226 (45%)	502	

assess the literary prestige of these authors. Therefore, it was not possible to first form categories and then to fill these randomly with authors matching the category definitions.

A final point concerning the authors' selection, is the large proportion of authors in the sample who write in the Dutch language. Half of the sample consists of Dutch or Flemish authors. There are two reasons for this overrepresentation. First, a substantial part of the frequently read and well-known authors in the Netherlands is Dutch or Flemish. Second, the prestige score was also used to determine the level of literature instruction in classes in the mother tongue in secondary education (see Verboord and Van Rees, 2003).

5. Results of the classification by literary prestige

The statistical technique Princals was used to determine authors' literary prestige, using the indicators described in Section 3. Princals is a non-linear form of principal component analysis which enables a large number of variables to be reduced to a smaller number of components or factors. The advantage of Princals compared to other techniques of data reduction is the possibility of including variables of different measuring levels, even nominal variables, in one analysis (Gifi, 1990). Reducing variables to components in Princals is done on the basis of covariances between variables, in this case, the indicators of literary prestige.

Princals is sensitive to extreme values ('outliers') within variables, and these outliers occurred in our indicators, especially in literary encyclopedias. Therefore, the scores on all indicators were first clustered in categories (see Table 1, last column). Only then was a Princals analysis performed. Fig. 1 shows how categories of the indicators related to each other in the analysis. Component loadings on the two

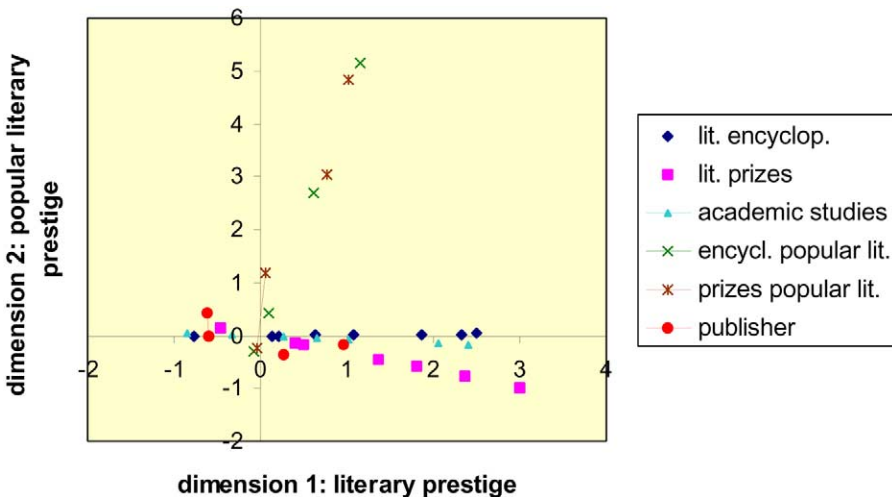


Fig. 1. Results Princals analysis (component loading).

most important dimensions are shown. Dimension 1 can be interpreted as literary prestige (eigenvalue = 0.479); Dimension 2 as prestige in the field of popular literature. Higher categories of the literary indicators are further to the right on the first dimension. This means that the more authors belong to categories of the indicators containing high scores, the higher their literary prestige. Two observations should be highlighted. First, the ranking on the first dimension yielded similar results for the three most important indicators: encyclopedias, prizes, and studies. For all three indicators, the categories lie in a fairly straight line parallel to Dimension 1. Second, the two indicators of popular literature, though a separate dimension, added to literary prestige. The component scores on Dimension 1 were used as scores for authors' literary prestige. This prestige is called Institutional Literary Prestige (ILP).

Table 9 shows the ranking of the first thirty authors by their Institutional Literary Prestige. The second column ('ILP') contains the literary prestige score; columns three to eight contain the scores on the indicators used. The two authors topping the list are Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Günther Grass. They owe their position to (1) a high mean number of words dedicated to them in encyclopedias, (2) having won a large number of (important) literary prizes, (3) a large number of academic studies of their work, and (4) being published by a large literary publishing house. Compared to them, authors in lower positions in the ranking obviously fall short on one or more indicator scores. Authors writing in the Dutch language seem to do relatively well on the list (Hugo Claus at 7, Simon Vestdijk at 12 and Harry Mulisch at 13). This is partly the result of the overrepresentation of Dutch authors in the sample. In addition, it is the consequence of having to match two electronic bibliographies. Falling just outside the top 30, John LeCarré's position at number 32 is shown to illustrate how lower scores on the literary indicators can be compensated for to a certain extent by higher scores on indicators of popular literature. Especially in terms of academic studies, he had a considerably lower score, but this was compensated for by the attention he receives in encyclopedias of popular literature and the number of prizes for popular literature he has won.

6. Discussion

In this study, a new classification system for authors was investigated: the Institutional Literary Prestige (ILP) classification system. Authors were classified by the literary prestige they hold in the literary field. Literary prestige was measured using the value assigned to authors by literary institutions such as critics and publishing houses. Four indicators of this value were used: entries in literary encyclopedias, the winning of literary prizes, the attention given in literary studies and the status of the publishing house.

For a number of reasons, this new measuring instrument, the ILP, represents an improvement on earlier methods of classifying literary prestige (or quality). First, the indicators used originated from the theory of the literary field (Bourdieu, 1983; Van Rees and Dorleijn, 2001); this increased the validity of the measurement. According to this theory, literary institutions, as well as agents within these insti-

Table 9
Ranking of authors by their Institutional Literary Prestige (ILP)

		ILP	Literary indicators				Poplit. ind.	
			Encycl.	Prizes	Studies	Publish	Encycl.	Prizes
1	Gabriel Garcia Marquez	4.04	1551	24	1288	4	0	0
	Günther Grass	4.04	2232	30	644	4	0	0
3	Toni Morrison	3.98	728	20	998	4	0	0
4	Philip Roth	3.86	813	22	338	4	0	0
	Salman Rushdie	3.86	776	20	471	4	0	0
	Margaret Atwood	3.86	737	8	683	4	29	3
7	Hugo Claus (D)	3.76	781	12.5	950	4	0	0
	Mario Vargas Llosa	3.76	1119	19	695	4	0	0
9	Isaac Singer	3.64	982	18	311	4	0	0
10	Albert Camus	3.62	2327	10	1866	4	0	0
11	Umberto Eco	3.60	1001	7	447	4	38	1
12	Simon Vestdijk (D)	3.56	840	8	1064	4	0	0
13	Fedor Dostojewski	3.46	3582	Miss	2735	4	63	0
	Harry Mulisch (D)	3.46	502	8	743	4	11	0
15	Iris Murdoch	3.43	930	12	362	3	0	0
16	Willem Frederik Hermans (D)	3.40	570	6	859	4	0	0
17	Gustave Flaubert	3.39	1527	Miss	2118	4	0	0
18	Jane Austen	3.32	1085	Miss	1956	4	0	0
	Louis Couperus (D)	3.32	784	Miss	602	4	0	0
20	Marnix Gijzen (D)	3.28	415	6	447	4	0	0
21	Gerard Reve (D)	3.25	487	3.5	687	4	0	0
22	Louis Paul Boon (D)	3.25	446	4.5	945	4	0	0
23	F. Bordewijk (D)	3.19	471	3	389	4	12	0
24	Lev Tolstoi	3.14	3280	Miss	1964	3	0	0
25	Thomas Mann	3.13	2855	Miss	2861	4	0	0
	Willem Elsschot (D)	3.13	638	4	324	4	0	0
	Herman Hesse	3.13	1188	Miss	662	4	39	0
	Multatuli (D)	3.13	587	Miss	961	4	0	0
	Charlotte Brontë	3.13	678	Miss	964	4	0	0
30	Milan Kundera	3.07	788	14	197	3	0	0
.....								
32	John LeCarré	3.03	453	7	72	1	688	17

D = Dutch language.

tutions, hold certain positions which structure, modify, and legitimize their practices of literary production. The assignment of properties and qualities to literary works exceeds the level of mere material output, as this is inevitably interpreted with regard to these positions. Consequently, practices of material production of literature and practices of symbolic production, which indicate the values that are attributed implicitly or explicitly to objects and persons in the literary field, are interdependent. The concrete value attributions used here to measure literary prestige extend to several ways of paying attention to literary works and their authors. Authors who are regarded as important receive more attention from literary organizations such as literary encyclopedias, literary studies, and literary prize circuits.

However, while all of these organizations are involved in classification practices, they differ in the precise nature of their tasks, the grounds on which they select authors, the influence their agents exert, and the status these agents acquire. Hence, to achieve a valid and reliable measurement, these differences had to be taken into account.

Second, taking the literary field as a starting-point for the analysis allowed me to use several indicators (institutions) and, within these indicators, several items (agents in these institutions), which improved the reliability of the measurement. A third advantage was the objective way in which the indicators of the literary field were measured. Instead of asking experts who have their own interests in the literary field—which could be interpreted as position-taking in Bourdieuan literary field terms in its own right, rather than just observing earlier position-takings—a more objective perspective was established by consulting literary encyclopedias, lists of award winners, and electronic bibliographies. The fourth, and final, advantage of the newly developed instrument regards the problem of missing data. By using existing, public information, selectivity problems and information loss owing to uncooperative persons were avoided.

Measurements were made for 502 authors who were expected to vary both in literary prestige and in familiarity among the public. The scores obtained on the six indicators (literary encyclopedias, literary prizes, literary studies, encyclopedias of popular literature, prizes for popular literature, status of publishing house) were analyzed using a Princals analysis. This resulted in classifications based on two components or dimensions, the first of which could be interpreted as the author's literary prestige, the second as the author's prestige in the field of popular literature. These interpretations were prompted by the component loadings of the various indicators. Attention given in literary encyclopedias, literary prize circuits, and literary studies, and to a lesser extent, the status of the publishing house, made the largest contribution to the first component, whereas attention in encyclopedias of and prizes for popular literature contributed chiefly to the second component. Inspection of the authors' classification appeared to confirm the quality of the established ranking by literary prestige. Generally, authors ranked high who were expected to, and similarly, authors considered not prestigious ranked low. It should be made clear, however, that such an inspection of authors' ranks cannot serve as proof of the validity of the classification, nor as a refutation. As the lack of a standard for classification by literary prestige was the starting-point of the research, it would be inappropriate to use our intuition about an author's prestige as a validation strategy.

Further validation of the ILP should be the focus of future research. Two alternative strategies could be followed to assess the validity of the ILP. First, one could try to validate the component loadings of the various indicators used. An obvious way to do this would be to collect the same data on a different yet comparable corpus of authors, run the same analysis, and compare the outcomes. This approach would shed more light on whether the impact of the various indicators can be generalized to other sets of authors. A second strategy would be to try to achieve the same results for the selected authors using different yet compar-

able items on the indicators. However, this strategy does not seem promising. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to come up with other good items similar to the ones used here. Especially for literary prizes, prizes for popular literature, and literary studies, most of the essential items in the field appear to have already been considered.

Notwithstanding this reservation, extensions of the instrument seem to be both possible and desirable. Additional data could be gathered on reviews and essays in news media, publications in literary magazines, and attention given in school books. Also, more explicit information on the other spaces in the literary field could be integrated in the operationalisation. Examples are references to the author in articles on other authors (position-taking), explicit evaluations by critics in reviews (position-taking), liaisons with literary movements (position-taking), and amount and type of sideline activities (dispositions).

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